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Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Ursinus College

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Ursinus College Bulletin.

VOL. I.

NOVEMBER, 1885.

No. 9.

The URSINUS COLLEGE BULLETIN is published by the *Executive Committee* of the Board of Directors of the College, and with the approval of the *Faculty*. The office of the BULLETIN is the College. It is issued *monthly*; each number containing, for the present, eight pages.

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The chief purposes of the BULLETIN are: Statedly to furnish facts concerning the current life and work of Ursinus College; to promote closer fellowship between the college and its friends, and to stimulate zeal for the vital interests which it represents; to supply items of literary and religious news, with special regard to a higher christian education and the evangelizing work of the church; to afford members and friends of the college a medium for occasional contributions; and to give assuring proof of the fidelity of the institution to the principles and aims for which it was founded, and of its efficiency in their maintenance and pursuit.

Short contributions of items and articles in harmony with these purposes are solicited, not only from the Alumni, but from all the friends of Ursinus College. They can do much in this way to make it interesting and effective. *Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*

The rule, "subscriptions cash in advance," will commend itself as a necessary one. Let all comply with it from the start. Any who may have found it inconvenient to comply with it, can do so by immediate remittance per mail. Let our friends also kindly realize the value of a wide circulation of the BULLETIN and vigorously aid in securing it. By a little special effort the circulation of the periodical could be largely increased and its usefulness correspondingly extended. The BULLETIN will be sent to friends until they request its discontinuance, and it is expected that they will pay the subscription for the year.

COLLEGE NOTES.

When the last number of the BULLETIN was issued the College had fully settled down to its proper work. And as there are designedly no provisions here for the cultivation of such "fine arts" as gymnastics, boat-racing, &c.,—the old-fashioned method of physical invigoration and diversion by walking, and occasional simple games of ball-playing being wisely preferred,—it follows that material is wanting for notes of extraordinary incidents. Hence, happily may we not say, this particular column of the present issue has nothing to report excepting that the good work of fairly diligent attention to class-duties is progressing.

Even the score of bicycles owned by as many students seem to be in less active operation during the past month, fair as the weather was, than when they were first introduced. The exciting novelty of the thing has somewhat lost its charm.

Of course the Address of Col. Bain was an event of stirring interest. But as this is duly noticed elsewhere, it need not be further mentioned here.

With the present number of the BULLETIN the College has passed the midway line of the long Fall Term, and doubtless some of the students are counting the remaining weeks as belonging to the rapid "home-run"—if that is the right word for it.

It will no doubt be gratifying to our readers that more space than usual can be given in the present issue to *Special Topics*, original and selected.

The College (Alumni) Library is growing slowly in the number and quality of books added to its shelves. Its value and interest are increasing in a corresponding measure. But there is still abundant room for improvement, and the exercise of generous liberality on the part of friends who have the disposition and means to do good in this direction. No doubt there are many such; many, especially who, though not gifted with ability to help the work by speaking or writing themselves, could furnish excellent substitutes in the form of good instructive books.

Often, however, such friends may be at a loss to make selections. To relieve them somewhat on this point they will permit an occasional suggestion of books most needed, and likely to be useful. As a specimen let them note the following for the present:

Rawlinson's Ancient Monarchies.

The Encyclopedia Britannica.

Duncan's Philosophy of the Seasons.

History of the World by Philip Smith.

Morrell's History of Modern Philosophy.

Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament.

Ancient Philosophy, by W. Archer Butler.

Schaff's, Herzog's Encyclopedia.

COL. BAIN'S LECTURE.

Notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the weather on the evening of the 20th of Oct., the college chapel was well filled with an eager and enthusi-

astic audience anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Kentucky orator, Geo. W. Bain, who was to deliver his descriptive lecture on "A Journey to the Golden Gate, or The Age and Land in Which we Live." As the orator appeared on the stage he was greeted with the enthusiasm and applause which is characteristic of a Collegeville audience. In an easy and at times eloquent manner the speaker conveyed his hearers over the hills and valleys, mountains and plains, forests and prairies of the great West, beyond the Rockies to the point where the sun in his Western course sheds his last ray on the American Continent. His "side tracks," in which he touched on the Indian and Chinese questions, temperance, etc., made up a particularly interesting and instructive feature of the lecture. In his whole manner Mr. Bain shows that he possesses the characteristics of a true orator and he has a beauty and fluency of expression which may justly entitle him to the appellation "silver-tongued." The lecture itself was substantial and very instructive and those who heard it went away feeling greatly benefited thereby.

THE LITERARY SOCIETIES.

THE NEW BOOK-CASE which was in course of construction by the *Schaff Society*, when the last number of the BULLETIN was issued, is now finished and is a handsome piece of furniture. It will hold one thousand volumes and cost the Society thirty-five dollars. The Society will take active measure toward filling the new case. They are now making arrangements for their coming *Anniversary* which will be held at the close of the ensuing term. Good music will add to the enjoyment of the occasion.

SPECIAL TOPICS.

COLLEGE LIFE.

There seems to be a somewhat prevalent impression that students in College are exposed to peculiar moral and social dangers. It is supposed that they are there, more than elsewhere, brought into associations and under influences which work injuriously upon their dispositions and tastes, and tempt them into vicious and hurtful ways. College life, as many regard it, not only is charged with making young people lazy and unwilling to do honest work for an honest living, but with puffing them up with pride and self-conceit. Besides doing harm in this way, it is held still more seriously responsible for betraying them into worse habits, and so turning the College into a school for scoundrels all the more to be dreaded because their education has qualified them to be more crafty and sharp.

Impressions like these may, doubtless, often be traced to ignorant prejudices, and probably even malicious motives. At the same time it cannot be questioned that some cause for them may be found in occasional facts. Cases have occurred which may seem to justify an opinion unfavorable to College life. There have been College students who have "turned out badly," leaving the School with far worse characters than they brought with them to it. And for this disastrous result the School may seem to have been responsible, and in some cases, possibly, might be fairly held to be responsible.

But the conclusions drawn from such cases have been unfairly sweeping. Exceptional instances have been magnified into common occurrences. A single case has been multiplied and squared

until it has run up to scores. The fountain has been condemned because some day a serpent came forth from it.

Furthermore, those who have yielded to the adverse impressions have mostly done so without a calm and intelligent consideration of all the facts which bore upon the case, and which would have greatly modified their judgment regarding it. Among such facts the following may be named :

The young men who attend a College are, as to temperament disposition and taste, like the average of other young men. All are more or less set in their ways of thinking, feeling and acting. They bring not only their trunks but their tempers with them, not merely their clothes but their characters so far as these have been already formed in their homes and by home associations. If home discipline has been lax, or the influence of it worldly, selfish, and irreligious, the fact soon becomes apparent. And yet the College is expected to correct or cure the evil at once, and should it fail through the willful perverseness of the youth, School discipline is blamed for the failure. No due allowance is made for what had become a chronic ailment.

Another mistake is made by assuming that the *number* of students who fall into bad habits is greater in proportion than of other young men. This assumption is not at all sustained by facts, any more than that other unjust and false assertion, that the sons of Christian parents, and especially of Ministers, are generally the worst in the community. So far is this opinion or complaint from being correct or just, that Colleges which pretend at all to maintain proper discipline or sound Christian principles may safely challenge the most scrutinizing comparison in this respect.

Take one more fact. The location and social surroundings of a College have naturally very much to do with the kind of life that prevails there, and the influences to which the students are subject. Sin and temptations must of course be encountered everywhere. But there are places and communities which are comparatively much safer in this respect than others. Often parents overlook this important consideration in selecting a School for their sons, and allow themselves to be swayed by other reasons. When it may be too late they discover their error. Then Colleges in general are blamed, and all must suffer.

To all this, however, there is a brighter side. If a young man's life at College is exposed to some peculiar perils, differing in certain respects from those he may encounter at home, it supplies, also, counteracting and corrective means of defence against them, and victory over them. Of those only brief mention can be made now, and that in general outline.

The School, it is assumed, is a Christian Institution based upon sound Gospel principles, and ruled by those principles in its educational aims and methods, and domestic discipline. This will give a predominant religious character and tone to its daily life. Every morning the work of the day is begun with the reading of the Bible, singing and prayer; and this not as a mere matter of decent devotional form, a sort of pious *prelude* to class-room work, but as a service prompted by a deep sense of the Heavenly Father's claims to a recognition of his kindness and mercies bestowed for Jesus' sake, and by an equally deep sense of dependence upon His favor and grace for success in the work of each day. Now it is hardly possible that a young man can be brought every morning under the in-

fluence of such devotions, without their producing some salutary effect upon his mind and heart.

To this must be added that the spirit of the season so spent in devotions may be expected to go with the Professors and Teachers, all Christians, into their several class-rooms, and impart a corresponding tone to the recitations. This may be especially expected in a school which strives diligently to combine moral with intellectual training, and the right culture of the heart with the acquisition of scientific knowledge. Let this be done day by day, hour by hour, and the young man who can resist its blessed influence must, indeed, be obdurately bent on evil.

Once more, let it be remembered, that College students are under the constant supervision of men who feel, in a fair measure, the sacredness of the trust committed to them, who are not only concerned for their progress in intellectual knowledge, but take a kind fraternal or even parental interest in them, and "care for their souls,"—and you get another salutary element in College life.

But one other fact on this side of the case can be named. Among the *students* of the College there is usually a good proportion of sincere Christians. These exert an influence in favor of godliness. They have their weekly prayermeeting, —and other special means of grace, to which every young man in the school is welcomed. Of course attendance upon them is free, and not required by the College rules. Each one, therefore may choose his particular associates. He may prefer those which are more frivolous and worldly, or seek personal fellowship with the better sort. The issue will soon reveal the nature of his choice.

Altogether, therefore, it may be claimed that in a properly regulated College a young man will find himself compassed about with greater helps and incentives to be and to do what is right, in the best sense, than are usually found elsewhere. It is true that in perverse contempt of all these, and of the most earnest counsel and warnings, he may prefer the counsel of the ungodly, and willfully yield to the enticements of sin. But those who do so as students, would be likely to do worse under other circumstances.

A VAIN BOAST.

Some years ago a conceited blustering public speaker boastingly told the crowd he was addressing that *he* "had never rubbed his back against a College wall." Of course no intelligent listener to his harangue needed the information. The nonsense he uttered, as well as bad language and worse grammar of his address abundantly betrayed his lack of culture and even of good common sense. There are many persons who never enjoyed the advantages of a higher education diligently improved, who can address public meetings with great acceptance and excellent effect, doing much good by their efforts. And they are always welcomed. But such persons never hold Colleges and a higher education in contempt. They have, on the contrary, so high an appreciation of them that they are among the warmest friends, and according to their ability, the most liberal supporters of literary Institutions.

Fairly analyzed the real import and intent of such contemptuous slurs as that referred to above amounts to about this :

1. That whatever special training ordinary young men require, the gentleman then holding his audience spell-

bound possessed natural gifts which put him far above the need of going through the drudgery of collegiate studies and higher school discipline,—as all who heard him could plainly discern ! One so richly endowed was under no necessity of having ever his back, let alone his head, improved and polished by academic fellowships and toils.

2. That *he* was an illustrious example of the complete independence of true talent of all such educational helps, and of the ease with which a prodigy like himself could outstrip school-trained students in any race they might venture to run with him.

If the spirit of the incident which has furnished the present topic were rare, there would be but little excuse for wasting time upon the case. But it is, unfortunately, only too prevalent, and forces its shallow arrogance frequently upon public notice. In various stations and professions there are those who though glaringly incompetent for the task they have undertaken, are yet so ignorant of their incompetence, that they cannot see their defects, and disdain instruction. Even their little "stock in trade," which they constantly display to their own best advantage, is pilfered from the very class of persons whom they seek to disparage; from earnest thorough-bred scholars the fruits of whose toils they dishonestly appropriate without giving credit to the meritorious author. And as the fraud, like many frauds in other cases, is not detected by the multitude that takes all for gold that glitters, such bold impostors frequently succeed whilst honest workers, and real merits suffer. The quack flourishes in his palace, and luxuriates in wealth, whilst men of true worth and culture are hidden away in corners, and are pining in poverty and neglect.

All this of course would be of small account in itself. "Wisdom is justified of children." And true merit, modestly felt, gives its own reward. But the thing has often the unhappy effect of leading young men and women, and people generally, to undervalue true learning, and to conclude that if a soap bubble can be wafted to the clouds by reason of its very emptiness, there is no use in learning to soar as on the wings of an eagle.

INFIDELITY PURE AND SIMPLE.

Man is the product of many forces, and cannot be considered by himself, apart from his environments. He does spring out of the dust, and if we would estimate his character, we must take account of his history, his ancestry, his education, and many other matters which go to make him what he is. The faith which shone forth so brightly in Timothy of old, dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, then in his mother Eunice, and afterwards in him.

We need to bear this in mind when we are estimating individual character. The excellences which appear in many people are not properly their own, but rather the results of righteous principles and long continued training in the midst of favorable circumstances. Hence, we cannot test the truth of doctrines or the correctness of principles by their immediate and apparent fruits, as seen in single individuals who have embraced them. Especially is this true of the principles of infidelity. Dr. Brown, of Newcastle, Pa., relates that a "Christian minister, in lecturing on the power and virtue of Christianity, declared that all true advancement—especially in social virtues—was the product of the Christian religion." At the close of his lecture a

gentleman arose in the audience, and said :

"Sir, I have lived in this neighborhood all my days, and I am willing to have any one present witness if I am not a good neighbor. I have a wife, and I would be willing to have her testify if I am not a good husband. I have children, and you may ask them if I am not a kind father. Now, you say that all true social virtues are the product of Christianity, but I am not a Christian. You must take back your statement. It is not the truth."

The lecturer, after a moment's pause, said : "Your father was an infidel, too, I suppose."

"Oh, no," was the reply, "my father was a strict old Presbyterian, who trained me all my young days in the Bible, the Psalms, and the Catechism. My father was anything but an unbeliever."

"Well," was the answer, "may it not be that all the social virtues of which you boast, and, no doubt, with good reason, are the direct product of your early Christian training? You have proved my assertion. But can you hope to be saved yourself by that, transmit these qualities to your children?"

It will be found to be a fact that among the vast number of skeptics on the earth, there are very few whose lives really illustrate the power of skepticism. Skeptics who have been reared in religious families, and trained all their young days in the Bible, the Psalms and the Catechism, give us no opportunity to study the workings of infidelity pure and simple. They do not go in the right lines where skepticism would propel them, but rather in the diagonal course, the result of the two forces which have operated upon them. If we are to know the *real fruits*

of infidelity, we must find men whose fathers and mothers, and grandfathers and grandmothers, were infidels; and not only infidels, but infidels of the most *thorough and pronounced type*. We must get infidelity pure and simple, free from all admixture of Christian principles and Christian influences. If we are to know what real infidelity will do for a man, we must get a man who has been trained in the utter absence of all Christian surroundings; who has been entirely separated from all Christian churches; who has never been educated in schools, academies, or colleges founded by Christian men, and based on Christian principles and conducted by Christian teachers; we must take the man away from all the ordinances of religion; he must be one who has never heard a gospel sermon, who has never listened to the songs of Christian praise or known anything of Christian prayer. He must be a man who has grown up where there were no days of Christian rest or Christian festivity observed; he must have read no books inculcating Christianity, or pervaded by Christian principles, or written from a Christian standpoint; he must be a man who knows nothing of Shakspeare, of Milton, of Burns, of Byron, or of Bacon; for the influences of Christian truth may be seen and traced in their writings, as in all the literature of the age. If we are to know what a man would be without a Bible, without Christianity, and without God, we must leave the regions of civilization, we must cut ourselves loose from the traditions of Christian literature and the influence of the age in which we live; we must make our abode among naked savages, cannibals, dwellers in caves and dens, in regions where the gospel has never been, in those dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty, and there see what man can do for himself without God, and without Christ and his gospel. It is only in this way that we can learn what infidelity can do for

man, or what man without God can do for himself. We shall thus get some idea of pure and unadulterated infidelity. But for a man who has been nurtured in a Christian family, educated in Christian schools, cultivated by reading Christian books, and environed by Christian life and love and prayer and blessing, to exhibit himself as a specimen infidel, descended from apes and monkeys, and showing what a man may become without the assistance of a Creator, is only another of those absurdities which indicate the astonishing credulity of the average unbelievers.—*Hasting's Armory*.

MONTHLY SUMMARY.

SYNODICAL.

At the Eastern Synod, which convened Oct. 14, in Millinburg, Union Co., Pa., besides the usual matters claiming attention, the following items possess special interest.

Licentiate W. E. Hay was ordained as an additional missionary to Japan.

Renewed attention was called to the appointment by the last General Synod (Baltimore, May 1884), of the THIRD SUNDAY IN JANUARY of each year as REFORMATION FESTIVAL, and the suitable observance of that day was warmly recommended. A number of historical considerations prompted the selection of the time for the commemoration, among which were the following: That Jan. 1, is the double anniversary of Zwingli's birth and his entrance upon the pastorate of the Cathedral Church in Zurich; that Jan. 19, is the anniversary of the adoption or first publication of the Heidelberg Catechism &c.

There are many reasons why such a memorial-day should be devoutly observed, and made, as it well might be, the occasion of reviving faith in the gospel principles and doctrines of the Reformed church of the 16th century.

The Synod also took favorable notice of Ursinus College, and of Franklin and Marshall Colleges.

The Potomac Synod met on Oct. 20, in Chambersburg, Pa., and is reported as having had a full attendance. One day was devoted to an excursion to Mercersburg, the location of the first College, (Marshall) of our church in this country, chartered in 1835-6. But how changed the times since then!

Other items are crowded out of the summary this month.

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The *Fall Term* for the several departments opened on Monday, August 31st, 1885, to continue sixteen weeks. For Catalogue and further information, apply to the President,

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